GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:637
ANSWERED ON:18.11.2016
Global Hunger Index
Kumar Shri Shailesh (Bulo Mandal);Rajesh Shri M. B.

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken note of the recently released Global Hunger Index which shows serious levels of hunger and malnutrition in India and ranked India at 97th in the list of countries;
(b) if so, the long term policy measures and holistic response taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to tackle the issue;
(c) the number of times the Prime Minister"s Council on India"s nutritional challenges met in the last two years; and
(d) the status of National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB) and proposed measures to strengthen it?

Answer

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI)

(a) Government is aware of recently released Global Hunger Index prepared by the IFPRI in 2016. India has been ranked 97th among the 118 countries surveyed in 2016 Global Hunger Index (GHI).

(b) Malnutrition is complex, multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, needing convergence of interventions, coordination and concerted action from various sectors. The causes are inadequate access to food, health services, safe drinking water, sanitation and environmental conditions, educational levels, income and socio-cultural factors like early marriage, etc. Situation is further compounded by ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections.

The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through State Governments/UT Administrations.

This Ministry is implementing Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Scheme for Adolescent Girls and Maternity Benefit Programme as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition among children.

Besides, Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) of the Ministry of Women and Child Development with its 43 field units in India is engaged in creating awareness in nutrition in collaboration with State Government / institutions through exhibitions; advertisement in audio-visual and print medium; lectures promoting the consumption of balanced diets and inclusion of fruits and vegetables in the daily diets in addition to demonstrations of low cost nutritious recipes using locally available foods; training of field functionaries and training in food preservation for grassroots level workers; celebration of nutrition related events, etc.

Under National Health Mission, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has undertaken various measures to address issue of malnutrition which include:

i. Early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding for first six months and appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices are promoted in convergence with Ministry of Women and Child Development. Village Health and Nutrition Days (VHNDs) are observed for provision of maternal and child health services and creating awareness on maternal and child care including health and nutrition education. The recently launched "MAA Campaign", has been designed to promote and support breastfeeding and complementary feeding through building capacities of health workers on lactation management at both community and facility level and by creating awareness through 360 degree IEC campaign.

ii. Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres have been established at health facilities to manage severe acute malnutrition in children below five years.

iii. Some other important interventions are Iron and folic acid (IFA) supplementation for the prevention of anaemia among the vulnerable age groups, Vitamin-A Supplementation for children in the age group of 6-59 months, annual deworming on National Deworming Day (NDD), home visits by ASHAs to promote use of ORS and Zinc for management of diarrhoea in children.

All these schemes have potential to address one or other aspect related to Nutrition including nutrition of children.

(c) The Prime Minister's National Council on India's Nutrition challenges has been set up as an apex body for policy review and directions. The first meeting of Prime Minister's National Council for India's Nutrition Challenges was held on 24th November 2010. No meeting on Prime Minister"s Council on India"s nutritional challenges was held in the last two years.

(d) The National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau was initiated in the year 1975 under the aegis of Indian Council of Medical Research

(ICMR), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), with the objectives of assessing the nutritional status of different population groups through diet surveys and anthropometry. Since inception the bureau had carried out four rounds of survey in rural areas of the country, at an interval of 10 years and 3 rounds of survey in tribal population at an interval of 10 years, and lately an urban survey was carried out in 16 States. As the NNMB has been in operation on a project mode for the last four decades, the Ministry of Finance had advised to terminate the same; accordingly the NNMB was terminated with effect from 31.10.2015.

****